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Weekend edition

A Metroland Community Newspaper serving the Town of Milton

VOLUME 7, NUMBER 42

MILTON, ONTARIO, FRIDAY JANUARY 31, 1992

50 CENTS (GST included)

28 PAGES

Lay-offs not an option for board

ANGELA BLACKBURN
Special to The Champion

The public school board will not lay-off teachers or support staff to bring its 1992 operating budget increase on par with inflation, the director of the Halton Board of Education told school trustees Monday night.

But education director Bob Williams promised staff would bring forward recommendations for "painful cuts" to remove \$12 million from a preliminary \$296-million 1992 operating budget.

Some trustees, however, want to see \$16 million cut out of the preliminary budget.

Currently, the board's proposed \$296-million operating budget — which contains no new programs — represents a 7.8 per cent increase from last year's budget. Staff's target is to bring the increase down to 3 to 4 per cent which would be on level with the inflation rate.

"There will be no layoffs. We believe we can bring the budget in with no layoffs for staff. That's not to say there won't be fewer staff in the system next year, but anything that occurs in terms of reduction will be in terms of attrition," Mr. Williams told trustee's at Monday's finance committee meeting in Burlington.

"To believe significant reduction will come without any pain is an illusion. To believe it will not be having an impact on the schools is an illusion," he added.

Trustees were told staff would return to the finance committee on Feb. 17 with a base budget reflecting \$12 million in cuts. The 1992 operating budget must be approved by March 31.

Staff also produced a \$20 video on the 1992 budget crunching which trustees saw in private at the meeting. The video outlined the budget restraint process while allaying staff fears or layoffs. The video was to remain confidential until all school board staff have an opportunity to view it. Mr. Williams said the press would be able to view the video on Friday.

Mr. Williams stressed the restraints should not cripple the existing system.

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Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

U.F.O.

The snow has lasted long enough to provide some fun for 13-year-old James O'Meara of Milton who spent Sunday afternoon sliding down a hill at Laurier Avenue and Commercial Street.

D'Amico's skate tomorrow

Celebrity guest Don Cherry and hockey legend John D'Amico will take to the ice to raise money for Easter Seals tomorrow (Saturday) at Memorial Arena.

The skate-a-thon is sponsored by the Ministry of Correctional Services and staff of the ministry along with inmates will lace up for the 7th annual event that kicks off with a breakfast at Maplehurst Correctional Centre.

Lending their celebrity status to the John D'Amico Skate-a-thon will be Easter Seal twin Timmys, Joshua and Jeremy Davis and Tammy, Misty Pritchett as well as a number of local personalities. Maplehurst was the site of the first John D'Amico Skate-a-thon in 1986. Since that time the event has grown and now it has spread to five correctional facilities in Ontario.

"We anticipate 1992 to be our best Skate yet with a target amount of \$25,000 set for the event," said Mr. D'Amico, skate-a-thon chairman.



Correction

A story in Wednesday's *Champion* erroneously indicated that a man being detained at Maplehurst sustained life-threatening injuries as a result of a beating at the local detention centre.

Police believe the man, Balbir Dhaliwal, 36, suffered a head injury prior to his arrest in Peel Region on Thursday, Jan. 23. Autopsy results released Wednesday, Jan. 29 revealed he died as a result of pneumonia at Hamilton General Hospital on Tuesday, Jan. 28. His pneumonia was caused by the head injuries.

The Halton Regional Police major crime bureau has launched an investigation and is concentrating on the victim's activities prior to his arrest, a police press release issued Wednesday stated.

The *Champion* apologizes to Maplehurst for the error and any negative impact it may have had on those associated with the institution.

The local police service became involved in the investigation along with the Ministry of Correctional Services after an inmate found Mr. Dhaliwal unconscious in the showers at Maplehurst Detention Centre on Friday, Jan. 24. Mr. Dhaliwal had been arrested by Peel Regional Police on a charge of shoplifting.

He was being detained in Milton after a bail hearing.

According to police, it is believed the head injury which led to his death, contributed to his collapse.

Drop-in

Drop into the new leisure centre this weekend for a tour.

Visitors will be given free swim passes for use next week as well as a look at the double-pool facility on Main Street. Tours will run Friday from 6 to 10 p.m.; Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. Free swims will be held nightly next week.

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